

Review Date: May 20, 2014

Applicant: The City of Cape Coral

Authorized Agent: Planning Division, Department of Community Development

Case Staff: Rick Sosnowski, AICP, Planning Team Coordinator

Reviewed by: Derek C.S. Burr, AICP, Planning Manager

Request:

To revise two objectives (Objective 2.1 and 2.2) and two policies (Policies 2.2.1 and 2.4.2) of the Infrastructure Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Purpose:

The primary purpose of this amendment is to adopt an updated Water Supply Facilities Work Plan, consistent with the South Florida Water Management District's update to the Lower West Coast Regional Water Supply Plan. The Cape Coral Water Supply Facilities Work Plan (2009) is incorporated by reference in Policy 2.4.2 of the Infrastructure Element. The Utility Department's consultant has prepared an updated Water Supply Facilities Work Plan for this purpose, and it has been reviewed by staff. Adoption of this update is a requirement of s. 163.3177(6)(c), F.S. The secondary purpose of the amendment is to update Objective 2.1, 2.2 and Policy 2.2.1., housekeeping tasks to update the list of infrastructure projects to meet Cape Coral's future demands, consistent with the already-adopted schedule of capital improvements.

This text amendment would be undertaken through the "expedited state review process", a process that takes approximately six (6) months to complete.

Background:

Since the early 2000s, the Florida Legislature has enacted several bills that strengthen the statutory links between the regional water supply plans prepared by the water management districts and the comprehensive plans prepared by local governments. To that end, Florida Statutes require that the Infrastructure element identify such alternative water supply projects and traditional water supply projects and conservation and reuse necessary to meet the water needs identified in the regional water supply plan. Further, the state requires that the Infrastructure Element include a work plan, covering at least a 10-year planning period, for building public, private, and regional water supply facilities, including development of alternative water supplies, which are identified in the element as necessary to serve existing and new development. This is to ensure that local governments plan for the water supply sources and facilities to serve the existing needs and future growth.

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The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) approved the *2012 Lower West Coast Water Supply Plan Update (2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update)*, which triggers all of the local governments to update their water supply facilities work plans to maintain consistency with the regional plan. The *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update* and its supporting documents can be viewed at <http://www.sfwmd.gov/portal/page/portal/xweb%20-%20release%203%20water%20supply/lower%20west%20coast%20plan>. The Governing Board of the SFWMD approved an amendment to the *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update* on April 15, 2012 to designate the Lower West Coast region as a Water Resource Caution Area (WRCA). This WRCA designation requires that an applicant for a permit to operate a domestic wastewater treatment facility is required to submit a reuse feasibility study. The WRCA designation has no effect on Cape Coral's municipal facilities because they already employ reuse.

Cape Coral Water Supply Facilities Work Plan

The essential reason the state requires updates to Water Supply Facilities Work Plans is to ensure that local water supply facilities are appropriately coordinated with the periodic updates to regional plans. The *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update* presents water demand estimates, water supply issues and evaluations, water source options, and water resource and water supply development projects to ensure that future water supplies are adequate to support the region's growth, while sustaining its natural systems. It concludes that the future water demands of the LWC Planning Area can continue to be met through the 2030 planning horizon with appropriate management and continued diversification of water supply sources.

The conclusions of the *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update* most relevant to Cape Coral are that meeting the regional water demands necessitate continued development of alternative water supplies, including increased use of the Floridan aquifer system and reclaimed water, as well as increased emphasis and implementation of appropriate water conservation practices and water storage for dry season use. The Cape Coral Water Supply Facilities Work Plan states, "The City of Cape Coral's plan utilizes brackish well water treated using reverse osmosis, thereby already minimizing regional impacts identified for 2030 in the Lower West Coast Water Supply planning Region." The brackish well water is from the Floridan Aquifer, mentioned in the *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update*. Cape Coral has been regarded as a pioneer in reclaimed water, which has enabled the City to lower its annual per capita demand for water, also clearly consistent with the *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update*.

The Cape Coral Water Supply Facilities Work Plan provides annual projections of both potable and raw water demand to the year 2033. It also projects the incremental decrease in the potable and irrigation water supplied by domestic self-supply wells, that draw from the sandstone aquifer. The Work Plan also describes the small area of Cape Coral served by the Greater Pine Island Water Association, and the capital improvements necessary. No capital improvements were identified as needed that are not already in Cape Coral's schedule of capital improvements.

Objective 2.1, 2.2 and Policy 2.2.1.

Objective 2.1 and Policy 2.2.1. are proposed to be updated to reflect that some projects currently listed as being needed have already been completed, and to reflect the recently updated schedule of capital improvements. Adoption of these amendments will achieve consistency between the FY 2014 Adopted

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Budget, the Schedule of Capital Improvements, and the Comprehensive Plan. This amendment does not identify any new projects that have not already been reviewed and approved by the City Council.

Staff Analysis:

No changes to Cape Coral's water supply facilities planning were identified as being necessary to attain consistency with the *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update*, nor were any changes identified from the review of projected population demands. Adoption of the proposed amendment would appropriately update the Comprehensive Plan and achieve internal consistency and consistency with statutory requirements and the *2012 LWC Water Supply Plan Update*.